

**CLASS SPECIFICATION**  
**County of Fairfax, Virginia**

**CLASS CODE:** 3660

**TITLE:** BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NURSE CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST

**GRADE:** S-26

**DEFINITION:**

Under administrative supervision, functions autonomously as an advanced practice nurse and primary therapist/case manager, performing comprehensive behavioral health nursing services for clients with acute mental illness, substance use disorders, developmental disorders, co-morbid medical conditions, or co-existing disorders; participates in developing and evaluating the effectiveness of the mental health service delivery systems and programs; and performs related work as required.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASS:**

The BHN Clinical Nurse Specialist differs from the BHN Clinician/Case Manager in that the BHN Clinical Nurse Specialist serves as a licensed primary therapist and performs behavioral health nursing services with significant independence, whereas the BHN Clinician/Case Manager provides supportive counseling and nursing services under clinical supervision.

The BHN Clinical Nurse Specialist differs from the BHN Supervisor in that the BHN Supervisor performs supervisory functions which may include program and facility management, and functions as a nurse case manager with an assigned caseload, whereas the BHN Clinical Nurse Specialist serves as a clinical expert and a licensed primary therapist.

**ILLUSTRATIVE DUTIES:**

Serves as clinical expert and primary mental health therapist, or substance abuse clinician independently performing diagnostic formulations and comprehensive evaluations;  
Provides direct nursing client care in a full range of individual and group psychotherapeutic and advance case management services, to include medications, relapse prevention, community maintenance, adaptive behavior change, crisis intervention and stabilization;  
Performs complex evaluations and makes independent diagnoses using Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders;  
Performs physical/mental health assessments, including laboratory testing of new clients at intake and to clients on an ongoing basis as case manager;  
Develops treatment plans and adapts treatment interventions and approaches;  
Approves and/or implements treatment plans;  
Documents assessments, treatment plans and quarterly reports on clinical status of clients;  
Performs quality assurance review;  
Monitors and documents medication trials;  
Monitors client responses to psychobiological and nursing interventions, medications and other treatments;  
Monitors and assesses efficacy of medications and possible side effects;  
Monitors and assesses clients for risk of harm to self and/or others;  
Provides clinical preceptorship for APRN graduate interns;

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Provides training and consultation within CSB and community;  
Serves as a member or lead of a multi-disciplinary team, coordinating treatment plans with other medical and non-medical service providers;  
Develops and implements programs, activities and services, including training and educational activities;  
Researches and provides liaison for available community, private and government resources and support for clients requiring multiple services;  
Participates in the assessment and identification of the need to expand services to address emerging issues or service gaps in the Community Services Board's service delivery system, making recommendations for improvements or changes;

**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:**

Knowledge of nursing standards, theories, principles, practices, methods, processes, and procedures;  
Extensive knowledge of the principles, theories, and methods of the psychological and social development of the individual;  
Thorough knowledge of intake procedures, social history development and interviewing techniques;  
Thorough knowledge of available County, state, community, corporate and private resources and support for clients with mental and/or co-occurring substance use disorders/physical/mental illness;  
Thorough knowledge of major schools of treatment of emotionally and socially disturbed individuals;  
Thorough knowledge of substance use disorders and addiction signs and symptoms, assessment techniques, treatment interventions and approaches;  
Knowledge of federal and state pharmacy and medication clinic regulations and guidelines;  
Knowledge of psychiatric, psychological, and/or sociological terminology and concepts;  
Ability to conduct mental and physical health assessments, identify co-occurring conditions and assess level of risk to self and others;  
Ability to formulate diagnoses for clients with acute, chronic, severe mental illness;  
Ability to develop and adapt treatment plans and interventions and assess their effectiveness;  
Ability to diagnostically interpret data obtained from physical and psychological test results, medical/social histories, and interviews;  
Ability to assess and monitor the effects of medications;  
Ability to assess, monitor and analyze the impact of psychotropic medications;  
Ability to work as a primary therapist/case manager in a multi-disciplinary team;  
Ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with co-workers, public and private sector organizations, community groups, and the general public;  
Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

**EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS:**

Any combination of education, experience, and training equivalent to the following;  
Graduation from an accredited college or university with a master's degree in psychiatric mental health nursing, or other clinical specialty related to the area of assignment; PLUS

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2 years of post-licensure experience as a nurse in the specialty area of psychiatric mental health nursing, substance use disorders, mental retardation, or relevant clinical specialty.

**CERTIFICATES AND LICENSURES REQUIRED:**

Possession of a current license to practice as a Registered Nurse in the Commonwealth of Virginia or a multistate licensure privilege to practice as a Registered Nurse in Virginia; PLUS Registration with the Virginia Board of Nursing as a Clinical Nurse Specialist in psychiatric mental health nursing.

**NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:**

Criminal background record check;

TB screening upon hire and annually thereafter.

Contingent upon area of assignment, some positions within this class will require a National Provider Identifier.

ESTABLISHED: April 3, 2007